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ABSTRACT

This report presents a systematic model of dissemination as outlined for the Illinois Department of Adult, Vocational, and Technical Education, Research Coordinating Unit. A systematic model is described that is comprised of four integrated components, each formulated on a research base. The four elements discussed are (1) conceptual component (definition of dissemination, characteristics of dissemination planning, prerequisites to dissemination), (2) personnel component, (3) managerial component, and (4) administrative component. Three practical tools developed to facilitate the planning, conducting, and following up of dissemination efforts (managerial component) are described: individualized dissemination planning model, dissemination planning outline, and overall project dissemination plan. A final section discusses implementation of the dissemination model and each of its four components. Appendixes include a Glossary of Dissemination Terms and Dissemination Process Guidelines. (YLB)

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Dissemination of Vocational Education Program Improvement Products
A SYSTEMATIC MODEL

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Abstract

This report presents a systematic model of dissemination as outlined for the Illinois Department of Adult, Vocational and Technical Education, Research Coordinating Unit. The systematic model, as described, is comprised of four integrated components each formulated on a research base. Included with a description of the system as a whole and descriptions of each of the four components is a glossary of dissemination terms, dissemination process guidelines, and an individualized dissemination planning model. It is anticipated that this document will be used by Department of Adult, Vocational and Technical Education personnel and others interested in the dissemination process as the research base upon which to put into action a comprehensive, systematic approach to dissemination.

Introduction

A casual observer of vocational education dissemination efforts in the state of Illinois might remark, "There's a lot of dissemination going on here. Workshops are conducted, brochures are mailed, newsletters abound, and there are no less than 30 networks/agencies which engage in educational dissemination to local school districts." A second look would yield the question, "Why have research and development project staff, state personnel, personnel from those 30 networks/agencies, and, perhaps most importantly, educational personnel at the local level felt confused and uncertain about past dissemination efforts?" It was this more penetrating question which led to the funding and formation of the Dissemination of Vocational Education Program Improvement Products Project (Dissemination Project). In October of 1979, the Illinois Research Coordinating Unit of the Department of Adult, Vocational and Technical Education initiated funding and gave the charge to the Dissemination Project to describe a comprehensive, systematic approach to dissemination which could be implemented within the preexisting structure of Illinois. It was felt that a systematic approach would do much to bring order to the perceived chaos of dissemination and make dissemination efforts in the state more efficient and effective. State personnel demonstrated commitment to dissemination believing that efficient and effective dissemination contributes to overall program improvement.

Some of the first questions the Dissemination Project faced were: "What is the state of dissemination in Illinois? What is the existing structure with and within which we must work?" Personal interviews, two sample surveys, and two conferences revealed a complex variety of vocational educators and their attitudes, perceptions, and knowledge of what dissemination is; their respective roles and responsibilities; available resources; and current practices.[1] However, a composite picture could be drawn from this complexity.

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[1]Refer to *Dissemination and Utilization of Vocational Education Program Improvement Products/Final Report Phase One*, Department of Adult, Vocational and Technical Education, Research and Development Section, June 1980 and *Dissemination of Vocational Education Program Improvement Products/Final Report Phase Two*, Department of Adult, Vocational and Technical Education, Research and Development Section, June 1981 for a complete description and discussion of all project activities, methods, and conclusions.

Vocational educators in Illinois often interpreted dissemination as "telling" (primarily via print media) and seldom were involved in activities which helped to train, implement, or continue to use a given program improvement outcome. Educators were not familiar with various dissemination methods or strategies. The primary mode of dissemination was workshops, regardless of personalities, available resources, or the type of outcome to be disseminated. In many instances dissemination activities were neither planned nor followed up; they tended to be unrelated to each other or to a project goal, and fragmented. Typically, emphasis was on development. Once a research project was completed, with the findings published or a product produced, project staff tended to consider their role completed. When dissemination was addressed emphasis was on a final product and dissemination was regarded as an afterthought—an add-on activity following development of a program improvement outcome. Educators, in general, revealed a lack of awareness of the various persons/networks/agencies and their services which facilitate dissemination efforts and, even more crucial, a lack of coordination, cooperation, and collaboration among and between state staff, project staff, network/agency staff, and local level vocational educators was noted. Overwhelmingly, the need was expressed for some assistance, resources, and information on how to make dissemination efforts more successful.

Clearly, a number of attitudes, perceptions, situations, and constraints could be pointed to as an explanation of the general confusion about dissemination. But the Dissemination Project was striving to make their efforts a contribution to the future, not a rationalization of the past. The project staff began to try to answer questions expressed by Illinois vocational educators: What *is* dissemination? What *should be* the roles and responsibilties of persons involved in dissemination activities? What *are* the key ingredients to successful dissemination? The questions became more complex and the answers more remote. The dissemination literature and consultation with experts uncovered a wide array of dissemination thought ranging from suggestive ideas to dogma.[2] The task put to the Dissemination Project was to unravel a complex set of concerns, resources, and theory—to provide a well-researched, thought-out and tested base with which to respond to basic "how-to" dissemination concerns expressed by vocational educators. This booklet is the summation of that research. It describes the nuts and bolts of a comprehensive, systematic approach to dissemination in the state of Illinois. It is the foundation upon which to practically implement effective and efficient dissemination throughout the state of Illlinois.

Although responsibility for the ideas expressed herein lie solely with the staff of the Dissemination Project, it must be stressed that valuable cooperation, substantive comments, and administrative support was given by Nona Myers and Peter Seidman, Dissemination Project contract administrators during Phases One and Two respectively. Together with John

[2]Refer to *Dissemination and Utilization of Vocational Education Program Improvement Products/Final Report Phase One*, Department of Adult, Vocational and Technical Education, Research and Development Section, June 1980 for a review of pertinent dissemination literature. The Dissemination Project staff would like to acknowledge the critical review, constructive comments, and informative insight of Shirley Menendez and Nancy Farr, Illinois NDN Statewide Facilitators; Judy Smith of Dissemin/Action; Kay Adams and Norman Singer of the National Center for Research in Vocational Education; and Greg Goodman and Stephanie Siegel of CEMREL.

Washburn, director of the Illinois Research Coordinating Unit, and Ronald McCage, his predecessor, project staff was able to explore options and possibilities and yet focus its efforts to remain on target. Appreciation is also expressed to the many vocational educators who offered their concerns, ideas, and solutions. The project staffs of three Illinois Research Coordinating Unit projects are acknowledged for their cooperation and patience in helping to test and revise many of our concepts: District 113 Experienced-Based Education Demonstration Project, Methods and Materials for Entrepreneurship Education, and Health Occupations Planning Grant. A special note of gratitude is extended to Judy Short, Dissemination Project secretary, who kept us all "on task" and, together with Becky Smith, meticulously typed and assisted in editing the many revisions of this report.

A Systematic Model of Dissemination

The Dissemination Project was given the task of describing a comprehensive, systematic approach to dissemination. Research conducted by the Dissemination Project staff revealed that a systematic model comprised of four integrated components would be both comprehensive and effective for the state of Illinois. (See Figure 1, Components of a Systematic Model of Dissemination.) The four components combine conceptual, personnel, managerial, and administrative needs and concerns. Each component is dependent on the other three components yet each is independently important in that the loss of one component results in negative effects on dissemination efforts as a whole. Figure 2, Development of a Systematic Model of Dissemination, provides a pictorial presentation of the four components, each formulated on a strong research base, as an interdependent whole. Also reflected is the overriding concern of dissemination as an integral contributor to overall program improvement. Systematic dissemina-

Figure 1
Components of a Systematic Model of Dissemination

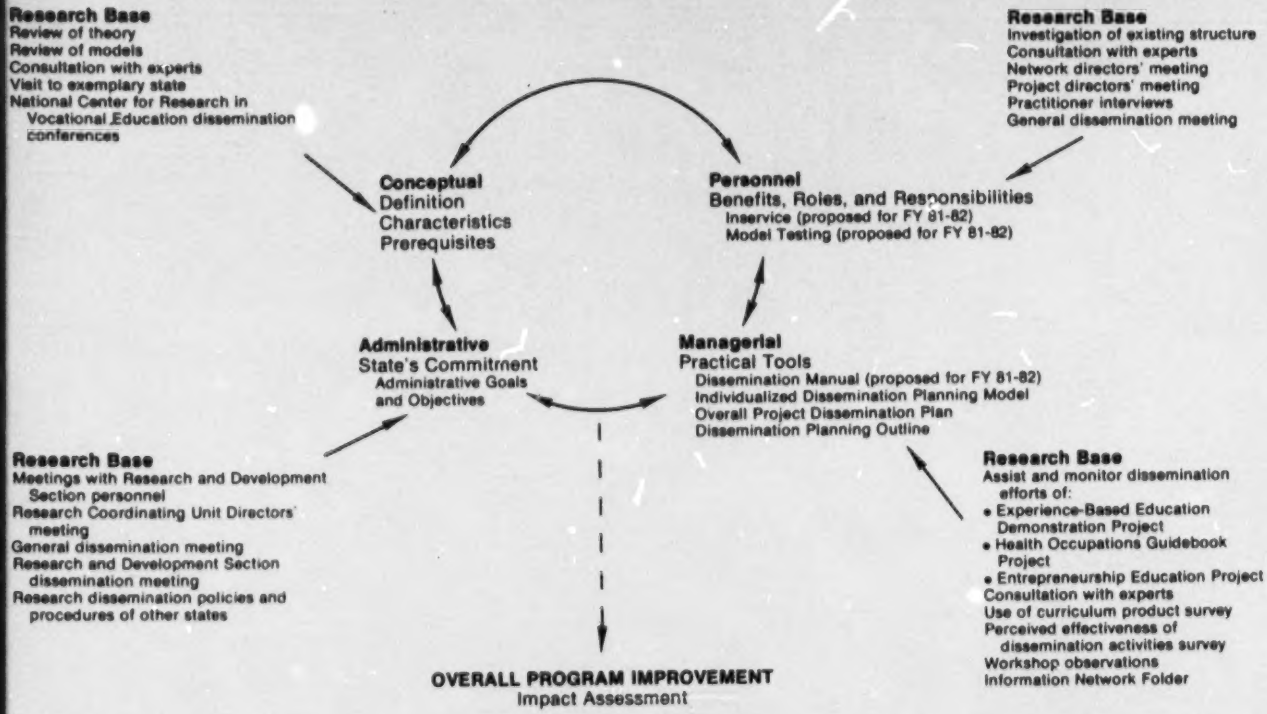
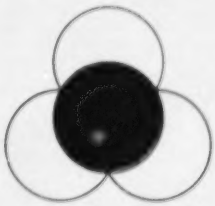


Figure 2
Development of a Systematic Model of Dissemination

tion, apart from facilitating the use of vocational education program improvement outcomes, provides valuable information to assess the effectiveness or impact of individual projects which contribute to program improvement efforts as a whole.

In Figure 2, each component is associated with key words to describe its substance, research base, and preliminary efforts to make the component a practical reality. The substance of each component is based on research conducted for the express purpose of the development of a specific component, as well as the development of the other components;[3] thus the notions of circularity and overlap are reflected in the two figures. The following pages outline in detail the parameters of each of the four components.



Conceptual Component

The conceptual component of the systematic model is the component with the greatest overlap or influence on the other three components of the model. It is comprised of primarily three aspects: (1) the definition of dissemination; (2) the characteristics of dissemination planning; and (3) the prerequisites to dissemination.

DEFINITION

Before development of a dissemination model can take place there must be agreement on a working definition of the term.

The Dissemination Project modified the four-level definition put forth by the NIE Dissemination Analysis Group to read: Dissemination is any activity which assists the target audience to (1) become *aware* of an outcome and its contents; (2) *understand* an outcome and how it can be used; (3) *decide* whether or not to use an outcome; or (4) *implement* and continue to use an outcome. It must be noted that, different from the terms dissemination and utilization or dissemination/diffusion, this definition of the single word "dissemination" includes the concept of use. The "four levels of assistance" imply a progressive *process* (awareness, understanding, decision, and implemenation) one must go through to eventually use a vocational education program improvement outcome. It also implies that active assistance must be provided to facilitate the occurrence of the dissemina-

[3]Many of the research activities contributed to the development of more than one component. However, unless considered to have equal significance with other components, research activities are listed with the one component most directly affected by the activity. The reader is again referred to *Dissemination and Utilization of Vocational Education Program Improvement Products/Final Report Phase One*, Department of Adult, Vocational and Technical Education, Research and Development Section, June 1980 and *Dissemination of Vocational Education Program Improvement Products/Final Report Phase Two*, Department of Adult, Vocational and Technical Education, Research and Development Section, June 1981 for a description, and the methods and analysis of Dissemination Project activities.

tion process. This process provides the structure for planning effective dissemination activities.

CHARACTERISTICS

If the dissemination process is to be facilitated, *efforts must be well-planned, conducted, and followed up.* Further, a number of characteristics which facilitate the dissemination process as a whole can be discerned.

Dissemination involves more than the dissemination of the primary or final outcome of a funded effort. It includes dissemination to targeted audiences of the ideas, information, concepts, materials, etc. which, in turn, contribute valuable information to the development of the primary or final outcome. These outcomes are termed supplementary outcomes. All outcomes (final or otherwise) can be classified into the categories of: general information (e.g., guidelines, public relations materials, rules and regulations); reports (e.g., bibliographies, final reports, research studies); supplementary or resource aids (e.g., handbooks, "how-to" guides); educational products (e.g., curriculum materials, instructional guides); and intangible educational innovations (e.g., models, concepts, programs).

Because dissemination is concerned with more than the final outcome, *dissemination planning is continuous.* Dissemination is thought about and preliminarily planned for at the proposal writing stage. If the dissemination process is to occur, dissemination activities must be planned, conducted, and followed up throughout a funded effort and must continue after project funding ends through appropriately designated means.

There are a variety of dissemination functions, procedures, activities, and techniques. These cannot be tied into a neat package which can be applied across the board to every program improvement outcome. Vocational education program improvement outcomes take many different forms and serve many short and long-term goals. Thus, different outcomes require different dissemination plans. The only response to the question "How should vocational education program improvement outcomes be disseminated?" is "It depends." *Dissemination planning is individual* to the type of outcome being disseminated, the target audience, the persons involved in planning, conducting, and following up the dissemination activity, and the availability of temporal, financial, and human resources.

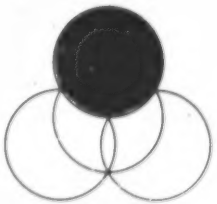
PREREQUISITES

Although the characteristics of continuous and individualized planning facilitate the accomplishment of the dissemination process, three requirements must be met to ensure successful dissemination efforts. Of course, these prerequisites permeate all aspects of research, development, and program improvement, and are not restricted to the domain of dissemination, but they do have particular implications for the dissemination process.

- A *need* for a particular outcome must be identified by and/or for a target audience. No matter how perfect an outcome may be, if a need for that outcome is not determined and clarified prior to development, the best dissemination efforts will still have little or no influence on its use.
- The outcome to be disseminated must be a *quality* outcome. Quality concerns include effectiveness and useability as well as format, packaging, and physical appearance of the outcome. Many dissemination activities that are planned, conducted, and followed up during the course of a funded effort contribute valuable information regarding the quality issue. Activities

(field testing immediately comes to mind) can be used throughout development to monitor continuous or changing needs, the focus of research and development activities, and general appropriateness of the outcome. Again, dissemination efforts are fruitless regardless of the expressed need if the outcome is not perceived as "good," "worthwhile," or meeting the need.

- *Coordination, cooperation,* and *collaboration* among persons involved in the dissemination process is required. The following groups are composed of persons to be involved: funding agency staff; project staff; persons/networks/agencies who facilitate access to an outcome; and the target audience. This requirement may be an organizational nightmare, but, as C. B. Myers was quick to point out: "The heart of the dissemination process is the personal and institutional goals of the people involved." Without *people* who are willing to share knowledge, information, and resources, dissemination efforts are doomed to failure.



Personnel Component

The structure of program improvement activities within the State of Illinois determines the different types of people to be involved in the facilitation of the disseminaiton process. The Research and Development Section of the Department of Adult, Vocational and Technical Education determines research needs, sets priorities, and initiates research and development funding. As the Illinois Research Coordinating Unit, they contract the bulk of their development work with various individuals, institutions, and agencies throughout the state. The office also contracts various personnel development and teacher inservice projects with outside persons and agencies. This relationship between the state as a funding agency and various individuals as project staffs, points out the emphasis to be placed on both groups of personnel to facilitate successful dissemination efforts.

The third group, particularly important in the context of Illinois, is composed of the persons/networks/agencies existing in Illinois which facilitate access to program improvement outcomes. Some of these information networks are directly affiliated with vocational education while others are not. Most are divided into regional offices, the boundaries of which are incongruent. They serve different populations, provide various services, and perform various roles. But the common thread that ties these groups of people together is their function to *link* resources and persons involved in program improvement research and development with practitioners in local level school districts. These people are, in effect, linking agents. They may assist in problem solving, provide inservice and technical asistance, act as resource brokers, or serve as consultants.

The final and perhaps most important group of persons to be involved in the dissemination process is the target audience. A single project may have a variety of target audiences depending on what is being disseminated. For instance, although a project may be developing curriculum materials for a target audience of high school business education teachers, the target audiences for the dissemination of the suplementary outcomes such as the

field-test version of the materials, or the project's final report, may be a very select group of individuals or experts. The target audience for a final or primary program improvement outcome is typically classroom teachers, district administrators, students, and/or parents. These persons on the local education level are the ones that require assistance to go through the levels of becoming aware, understanding, making decisions, and ultimately using or implementing a program improvement outcome. They are the "bottom line" in making change happen.

Although numerous combinations of roles and responsibilities for the various groups of persons can be suggested, an optimum configuration is offered here. Along with roles and responsibilities, the benefits of engaging in systematic dissemination or incentives to do so for the four personnel groups are identified.

- The dissemination role of the *funding agency staff* is facilitative, evaluative, and advisory in nature. Responsibilities include: (1) providing assistance to project staffs as they formulate and followup overall project plans for dissemination of a final or primary outcome, and particular dissemination activities; (2) determining appropriateness of plans and activities, and using followup information to monitor project activities and outcomes; (3) determining dissemination commitment and funding for final or primary outcomes; and (4) facilitating the coordination and collaboration of project staffs and appropriate information agencies/networks.

Some of the benefits to funding agency staff for taking on such responsibilities include: (1) greater visibility and success for funded projects; (2) greater ability to monitor the quality of project activities and outcomes; (3) increased job efficiency and effectiveness; (4) national and statewide perception of provision of leadership; and (5) more recognition for self and state agency.

- Project dissemination activities are generally part of the scope of work identified in the funding proposal. *Project staffs* engaged in *research and development* as compared to service activities are responsible for making sure that dissemination activities included in the funding proposal get done. Since project staff are often not experts in dissemination (nor is there any particular reason why they should have such competence), this responsibility can seem ominous. Like other project activities, dissemination depends upon planning and followup for its accomplishment and those functions *are* within the domain of project staff. The project staff plays a central role in assuring success of dissemination efforts by taking responsibility for planning and following up dissemination, locating appropriate information agencies/networks and other resources as needed, and generally overseeing the dissemination process. Thus, the dissemination responsibilities of project staff include: (1) preparing a dissemination planning outline at the time of proposal writing; (2) preparing a dissemination plan for the project as a whole; (3) coordinating linkage with appropriate information agencies/networks; (4) following up the extent of overall project dissemination efforts planned and conducted during the funded effort; and (5) providing information and recommendations for post-funding dissemination efforts.

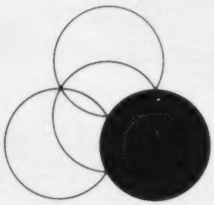
Incentives for project staff to take on such responsibilities include: (1) greater success and visibility for development activities; (2) personal satisfaction at seeing outcomes used and appreciated; and (3) recognition by colleagues and increased opportunities to attain career goals, e.g., writing commissioned articles, increasing visibility in the field, obtaining consulting jobs.

● The dissemination role of *information networks/agencies* is to act as a link between program improvement outcomes and the potential users of those outcomes. This group of persons includes funded project staffs who are engaged in providing a service rather than research and development activities. Responsibilities include: (1) collaborating with project staffs to assist with dissemination efforts which may involve planning, conducting, and following up particular dissemination activities; (2) helping local level educators identify and clarify their needs; and (3) assisting local level educators to match appropriate program improvement outcomes with identified needs and then assisting in providing appropriate implementation assistance.

Some of the benefits which accrue to information networks/agencies for using a systematic approach to carry out the foregoing responsibilities include: (1) increased ability to do their job better; (2) greater visibility among colleagues and in the field; (3) opportunity to work with a variety of people; and (4) personal satisfaction in providing a useful service.

● Although the *target audience* is primarily affected by dissemination activities they do have responsibilities to facilitate the success of efforts. It is the target audience's responsibility with assistance provided by appropriate information networks to: (1) identify and clarify program improvement needs; (2) access information regarding useability and effectiveness of outcomes; and (3) articulate and communicate the type of assistance needed or wanted to facilitate the use of outcomes.

Some of the benefits of taking on such responsibilities include: (1) needs have a greater chance to be met; (2) increased ability to do their job better; and (3) opportunities to take part in decision making.



Managerial Component

As mentioned, dissemination efforts must be well-planned, conducted, and followed up. Various persons have responsibilities regarding the planning, conducting, and following up of assistance activities. The question immediately comes to mind, how does one go about doing this?

The following pages describe the practical tools developed by the Dissemination Project to facilitate the planning, conducting, and following up of dissemination efforts.

INDIVIDUALIZED DISSEMINATION PLANNING MODEL

Figure 3 depicts the steps one follows when planning dissemination efforts. The Individualized Dissemination Planning Model can be used by funding agency staff, project staff, and/or information networks when formulating dissemination plans for a project as a whole, for particular dissemination activities, or for the dissemination of particular outcomes. A description of each of the planning steps follows.

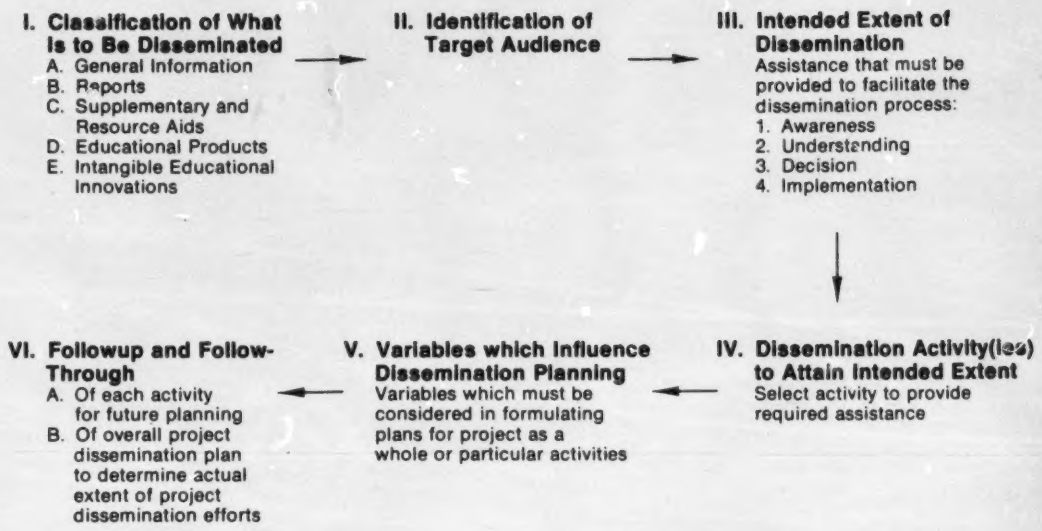

I. Classification of What Is to Be Disseminated
A. General Information
B. Reports
C. Supplementary and Resource Aids
D. Educational Products
E. Intangible Educational Innovations
II. Identification of Target Audience
III. Intended Extent of Dissemination
Assistance that must be provided to facilitate the dissemination process:
1. Awareness
2. Understanding
3. Decision
4. Implementation
IV. Dissemination Activity(ies) to Attain Intended Extent
Select activity to provide required assistance
V. Variables which Influence Dissemination Planning
Variables which must be considered in formulating plans for project as a whole or particular activities
VI. Followup and Follow-Through
A. Of each activity for future planning
B. Of overall project dissemination plan to determine actual extent of project dissemination efforts

Figure 3
Individualized Dissemination Planning Model

I. Classification of What Is to Be Disseminated. The question asked here is: What is being disseminated and into what general category can it be placed? This question begins the planning cycle because different outcomes require diffferent planning to attain the minimum level of assistance required to have the outcome used. Outcomes can be classified into the following categories.

A. General Information
Bulletins, guidelines, e.g., *Annual Program Plan for Voc Ed in IL—FY 1980*
Public relations materials, e.g., brochures, press releases, newsletters, advertisements
Rules and regulations, e.g., *Federal Register*
Policies and procedures

B. Reports
Research studies
Project final reports
Bibliographies

C. Supplementary and Resource Aids
Handbooks
"How to" guides
Program management aids
Resource guides

D. Educational Products
Curriculum materials
Instructional guides
Professional development materials

E. Intangible Educational Innovations
Models
Concepts
Practices
Programs
Ideas

II. Identification of Target Audience. A primary question asked at this step is: Who will be using that which is to be disseminated? These are the persons whose need is being addressed. The target audience may differ according to the outcome being disseminated. For example, the target audience for a brochure advertising curriculum materials will be a much broader group of people than the more selected target audience for the field test version of those same materials. The size of the target audience is important to dissemination planning especially when considering resources available for dissemination efforts.

A further question asked in this step is: What is the target audience like? Characteristics such as age, learning style, area of specialization may provide useful information regarding the minimum level of assistance required to facilitate the use of the outcome by the target audience.

III. Intended Extent of Dissemination. The question asked at this step in the planning cycle is: What is the minimum level of assistance which must

be provided to facilitate the dissemination process—to have the outcome used or implemented? The definition of dissemination provides the structure upon which to answer this question. Do the target audience and type of outcome require:

1. Assistance *to become aware* of the outcome and its contents?
2. Assistance *to understand* the outcome and how it can be used?
3. Assistance *to decide* whether or not to use the outcome?
4. Assistance *to implement* and continue to use the outcome?

Although specific target audiences must be considered when answering this question, outcomes generally can be matched with minimum assistance requirements.

CLASSIFICATION OF OUTCOMES	MINIMUM ASSISTANCE REQUIRED
A. General Information	
Bulletins/guidelines	awareness
Public relations materials	awareness
Rules and regulations	awareness, understanding
Policies and procedures	awareness, understanding
B. Reports	
Research studies	awareness
Project final reports	awareness
Bibliographies	awareness
C. Supplementary and Resource Aids	
Handbooks	awareness, understanding
"How to" guides	awareness, understanding
Program management aids	awareness, understanding
Resource guides	awareness, understanding
D. Educational Products	
Curriculum materials	awareness, understanding, decision, implementation
Instructional guides	awareness, understanding, decision, implementation
Professional development materials	awareness, understanding, decision, implementation
E. Intangible Educational Innovations	
Models	awareness, understanding decision, implementation
Concepts	awareness, understanding decision, implementation
Practices	awareness, understanding decision, implementation
Programs	awareness, understanding decision, implementation

IV. Dissemination Activity to Attain Intended Extent. At this step one asks the question: What dissemination activities will provide the minimum assistance required? Depending on the assistance required to facilitate the dissemination process (as determined in step III), one can choose from a wide variety of dissemination activities to be planned, conducted, and followed up. Below is a partial listing of activities categorized by the type of assistance they provide.

Awareness
Brochures, press releases, newsletters, advertisements
Submit outcome to ERIC
Loan of materials through state/regional libraries/universities/public libraries
Articles in journals
T.V./radio announcement

Understanding
Availability on a cost recovery basis
Examination/complimentary copy
Demonstrations/presentations at conferences
User panel discussions
Informal communications
Toll free telephone number

Decision
On-site demonstrations/demonstration centers
Field testing
Comparative catalog of alternatives
Workshops
Information on various resources which meet same need

Implementation
User communication network
Information on adaption techniques
On-site technical assistance
Continued technical assistance
Training program
Telephone hot-line

V. Variables which Influence Dissemination Planning. One asks at this fifth step: What variables must be considered when planning for dissemination? A number of variables have been found to influence the successful planning of dissemination efforts. These variables can be divided into those which are especially pertinent to project dissemination efforts as a whole and those which influence the success of particular dissemination activities.

Variables which must be considered in formulation of project dissemination plans as a whole include:

The outcome to be disseminated;
The target audience(s);
Persons involved in planning, conducting, and following up dissemination activity(ies);
Availability of temporal, financial, and human resources;
Target audience involvement in early development of final or primary outcome;

Incentives for project staff and persons/networks/agencies who facilitate access to an outcome.

Variables which must be considered in formulation of plans for particular dissemination activities include:

Audience identification,
Advertising,
Audience expectations, sense of ownership,
Prior assistance provided,
Use of information networks,
Location,
Time of year/time of day,
Length of time required to conduct activity,
Size of group,
Format/packaging/physical appearance of outcome,
Advocacy/support systems of the outcome and/or activity required,
Incentives for target audience.

VI. Followup and Follow-through. The sixth and final step in the planning cycle well may be its most important feature. The question asked at this step is: What is the actual extent to which dissemination occurred? Followup not only provides information on the effectiveness of dissemination efforts and the facilitation of the dissemination process, but it also provides valuable information for the planning of future activities and needs for further assistance. Planning of project dissemination activities, like development activities in general, must be flexible to accommodate feedback provided through followup. Followup information is also useful feedback for continued development regarding development needs, target audience, and quality of outcome.

Followup information can be gathered through methods such as sample surveys, telephone conversations, interviews, or participant action plans, to name only a few. It is important to find out: the actual extent to which dissemination occurred; and target audience request for further assistance. The notion of **follow-through** relates to the acutal modifications made in planning and the response to needs for further assistance.

Followup of dissemination efforts for the project as a whole provides information from which to make decisions regarding the commitment and the extent of dissemination activities after project funding ends. Data on the extent to which outcomes are used facilitate impact assessment to determine the outcome's effect on program improvement.

DISSEMINATION PLANNING OUTLINE

One of the characteristics of dissemination planning is that it is continuous—initiated in the proposal for a program improvement activity, and continued during and after the funded effort. To facilitate planning for dissemination in funding proposals, the Dissemination Project developed a dissemination planning outline to be included within proposals. The dissemination planning outline reflects the planning, conducting, and following up of dissemination activities thoughout the current fiscal year. Dissemination activities listed in the outline are also included in the time and sequence chart and budgeted accordingly. The outline is used as a framework for a more detailed project dissemination plan to be formulated after notification of funding, with the assistance of the funding agency staff.

The dissemination planning outline was developed on the basis of the previously described individualized dissemination planning model. It is presented in outline format in the proposal to facilitate its review by proposal evaluators and its use as a monitoring device by funding agency staff following notification of funding. The dissemination planning outline is presented below.[4]

DISSEMINATION PLANNING OUTLINE

I. Name of Project

II. Dissemination Goal of Overall Project

A. What is the primary or final project outcome to be disseminated?

B. Who is the target audience(s) for this primary outcome? i.e., teachers, state staff, counselors, etc. Approximately how large is this population?

C. What is the goal of the sum of all dissemination activities to be planned, conducted, and followed up throughout the entire funded effort, i.e., that the target audience will (1) become aware of the primary outcome and its contents; (2) understand the primary outcome and how it can be used; (3) decide whether or not to use the primary outcome; (4) implement and continue to use the primary outcome?

III. Dissemination Goal of Current Fiscal Year

For some projects, this goal may be the same as II (Dissemination Goal of Overall Project). For other projects funded in phases, it may reflect a specific emphasis on dissemination activities related to a research phase, development phase, field-test phase, etc. The goal is expected to become more specific and clearly articulated as development activities progress.

A. What is the outcome(s) to be disseminated in the current funding phase?

B. Who is the targeted audience(s) for this outcome(s)?

C. What is the goal of the dissemination activities to be planned, conducted, and followed up throughout the current funding phase?

IV. Particular Dissemination Activities

What are the individual activities that will be planned, conducted, and followed up throughout the current funding phase to achieve the dissemination goal of the current funding phase (III), or if there is only one funding period, to achieve the dissemination goal of the overall

[4]Sample dissemination planning outlines can be found in *Dissemination of Vocational Education Program Improvement Products/Final Report Phase Two*, Department of Adult, Vocational and Technical Education, Research and Development Section, June 1981.

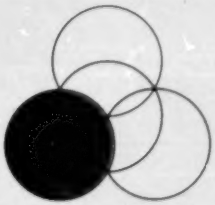
project (II)? Each activity should include elements of target audience identification, planning and followup.

V. Followup of Dissemination Goal of Overall Project

The followup activities of the overall project dissemination goal occurs as part of end of project efforts to determine the actual extent to which the primary outcome was disseminated.

OVERALL PROJECT DISSEMINATION PLAN

The dissemination planning outline is the skeleton of the plans for the dissemination efforts of the entire project. Following notice of funding, project staff and funding agency staff meet to discuss the specifics of the outline and to formulate a project dissemination plan. The plan reflects the progressive dissemination process and includes the dissemination of the project's primary or final outcome as well as the supplementary outcomes which contributed to its development. As particular dissemination activities are planned, conducted, and followed up, the direction of dissemination efforts as related to the overall project is rethought and revised to assure quality of the primary project outcome. The overall project dissemination plan is followed up to determine the extent of dissemination efforts for the project as a whole which provides information that assists in making decisions regarding post-funding commitment and direction of dissemination efforts.



Administrative Component

Administrative support is essential for dissemination change to take place. A systematic approach to dissemination initiated at the state level requires leadership, support, and commitment from the state agency. In an attempt to exhibit their leadership and commitment, staff of the Illinois Department of Adult, Vocational and Technical Education, Research Coordinating Unit worked with the staff of the Dissemination Project to draft dissemination goals and objectives for the state.[5] The five goals and related objectives rely heavily on the conceptual and personnel components of the systematic model. The goals relate to the definition of the dissemination process; the characteristics of systematic dissemination planning; and the prerequisites of dissemination. The administrative goals for a systematic approach to dissemination drafted for Illinois are:

Goal 1. Dissemination is any activity which assists a target audience to (1) become *aware* of an outcome (general information, product, practice, idea,

[5]The complete draft of the "Administrative Goals and Objectives of Systematic Dissemination" is included in *Dissemination of Vocational Education Program Improvement Products—Final Report/Phase Two*, Department of Adult, Vocational and Technical Education, Research and Development Section, June 1981.

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and/or concept) and its contents; (2) *understand* an outcome and how it can be used; (3) *decide* whether or not to use an outcome; or (4) *implement* and continue to use an outcome.

Goal 2. Dissemination activities are planned, conducted, and followed up throughout all phases of a funded effort. Dissemination activities are not limited to the final phase of a funded effort nor limited to the dissemination of a final or primary outcome. The planning, conducting, and following up of dissemination activities are individual to each funded effort. A systematic approach to dissemination contributes to program improvement.

Goal 3. A need for an outcome must be identified by/for a target audience.

Goal 4. The outcome to be disseminated must be a quality outcome.

Goal 5. The planning, conducting, and following up of dissemination activities require the coordination, cooperation, and collaboration among persons involved in the dissemination process. Persons to be involved include: funding agency staff, project staff, persons/networks/agencies who facilitate access to an outcome, and the target audience.

The objectives related to the foregoing administrative goals incorporate the function of the Illinois Research Coordinating Unit as well as the other personnel in a systematic approach to dissemination and emphasize the relationship between dissemination and program improvement. Most importantly, the objectives begin to present the procedures necessary to implement the systematic model of dissemination, including clarification of dissemination planning requirements, inservice requirements regarding roles and responsibilities, establishment of quality assurance criteria, and involvement of local level personnel in needs assessment and priority setting activities.

A Systematic Model of Dissemination in Action

The foregoing sections describe the components of a systematic model of dissemination comprising conceptual, personnel, managerial, and administrative elements. The natural question is : "How does this system get implemented?" In reality this question is related to the dissemination of the dissemination model itself. Various dissemination efforts such as meetings, presentations, and consultations were planned, conducted, and followed up which contributed to the development of the model. These efforts were specific activities for specific target audiences to disseminate specific information about the systematic model. Implementation of the model as a comprehensive whole requires the provision of a great deal of technical assistance to a much broader target audience—all of the persons involved in the dissemination process.

IMPLEMENTATION OF THE PERSONNEL AND MANAGERIAL COMPONENTS

The target audience of the systematic model is composed of the persons in the personnel component of the systematic model, i.e., funding agency staff, project staff, information network/agency staff, and users of vocational education program improvement outcomes. Each of these personnel groups have different assistance needs, dependent on their respective roles and responsibilities, which must be met to implement a comprehensive, systematic approach within the state of Illinois.

Two major activities will assist personnel in the implementation of a comprehensive, systematic approach to dissemination—inservice sessions and extensive testing of the model.

Inservice. Each of the personnel groups must be afforded inservice to provide a basic awareness and understanding of the dissemination process and a systematic approach to dissemination efforts. They must also be assisted in understanding their respective roles and responsibilities and the benefits of implementing a systematic approach. Benefits are emphasized as incentives with the realization that successful dissemination requires persons who *want* to engage in dissemination activities.

Dissemination literature, particularly case studies of implementation efforts, comment on the personal characteristics of an exemplary disseminator. Disseminator traits such as pleasantness, charisma, and ability to inspire are frequently referred to as important aspects of a successful implementation effort. Although such subtleties cannot be influenced, a number of other learnable skills such as ability to communicate, organize, and assist in problem-solving are also recognized as positive disseminator characteristics. These skills are especially important for persons who work with the potential users of program improvement outcomes. Because the information networks/agencies who link users with outcomes are an important element in the Illinois educational structure, and thus, in the systematic model as a whole; inservice, often referred to as "linker training", is essential for the successful implementation of the systematic model.

As a concrete, "hands-on" companion to inservice activities, the development of a "dissemination manual" is necessary. This manual should be a practical, how-to guide which will include information on the various services of information networks/agencies; examples of creative strategies and followup; critical issues; and cost and time estimates for activities. The manual should present—in a non-technical fashion—the managerial tools developed to facilitate successful dissemination efforts and be a part of the managerial component of the systematic model.

Testing. Extensive testing of the systematic model with targeted funding agency staff, project staff, and appropriate information network/agency staff will provide beneficial, first-hand experience with a systematic approach as well as respective roles and responsibilities. This technical assistance can instill a sense of ownership in the targeted persons through their contribution to the development of the system, and can create a cadre of well-informed, enthusiastic persons to assist with continued dissemination of the model.

IMPLEMENTATION OF THE ADMINISTRATIVE AND MANAGERIAL COMPONENTS

Administrative goals and objectives form the base of the administrative component of the systematic model. The five goals identified for Illinois relate to the conceptual component that is comprised of the definition of the dissemination process, characteristics of dissemination planning, and the prerequisites of successful dissemination. The objectives relate to the incorporation of the definition, dissemination planning outline and the overall project dissemination plan (the latter two elements being managerial tools) into administrative publications; the provision of inservice for

persons involved in the dissemination process; and the identification of more extensive administrative responsibilities which must be fulfilled to assure the successful implementation of the model.

It is recommended that the dissemination planning outline be included as a requirement in the Illinois Department of Adult, Vocational and Technical Education, Research Coordinating Unit request for proposal guidelines for proposal writers. In this way, project staff are strongly urged to think about and plan for project dissemination efforts as development begins. Further, criteria regarding the competence of a dissemination planning outline should be reflected in the proposal evaluation guide to assess the appropriateness of each proposal in addressing dissemination planning.

It is recommended that the idea of formulating an overall project dissemination plan, based on the dissemination planning outline in the proposal, be included in the Department of Adult, Vocational and Technical Education document entitled *Project Management Handbook*. The Handbook presents federal and state guidelines for the management of funding agreements for vocational education program improvement projects, and is used in conjunction with the request for proposals guidelines document. It is further recommended that roles and responsibilities regarding dissemination efforts and the reporting of such efforts be clearly delineated in the *Handbook*.[6].

It is clear that the systematic model of dissemination recommended to be initiated at the state level is dependent on much formal and informal collaboration among personnel for its successful implementation. The structure of program improvement efforts in the state of Illinois is highly complex which, in turn, contributes to the need for a comprehensive and systematic approach to dissemination efforts. Inservice and technical assistance activities are not sufficient to keep the system in fine working order.

In an effort to ease the complexity and to facilitate the required linkages, it is recommended that organizational and coordination dissemination responsibilities, beyond those already described for funding agency staff, be taken on by appropriate state staff or its designate to assure the implementation and continuity of the systematic model. Such services to be provided include:

- Ongoing provision of technical assistance to proposal writers in development of dissemination planning outlines;
- Ongoing provision of technical assistance to project staffs in developing and revising overall project dissemination plans;
- Facilitation of the use of information networks/agencies to assist in dissemination efforts;
- Coordination of the evaluation of outcomes developed out-of-state to determine their applicability and use within Illinois;
- Coordination of the periodic evaluation of existing outcomes to determine appropriateness and continued dissemination; and
- Coordination of the quality review of final or primary outcomes.

The administrative goals and objectives are meaningless without demonstrated administrative commitment to implement the drafted goals and

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[6]Refer to *Dissemination of Vocational Education Program Improvement Products—Final Report/Phase Two*, Department of Adult, Vocational and Technical Education, Research and Development Section, June 1981 for a full listing of recommended changes and/or additions to the *Project Management Handbook*.

objectives. Time and again educators refer to the need for administrative commitment as the most important dissemination problem. This is a particularly crucial point in the implementation of the systematic model of dissemination because it is initiated and ultimately administered by the state. Without administrative leadership, dissemination efforts will remain fragmented and confused. *With* administrative leadership—the state presenting itself as a model for other persons involved in systematic dissemination—dissemination efforts can be comprehensive, effective, and efficient.

Appendix

GLOSSARY OF DISSEMINATION TERMS

Dissemination: Dissemination is any activity which assists the target audience to (1) become *aware* of an outcome and its contents; (2) *understand* an outcome and how it can be used; (3) *decide* whether or not to use an oucome; (4) *implement* and continue to use an outcome.

This "four levels of assistance" definition implies a progressive systematic *process* (awareness, understanding, decision, implementation) one must go through to eventually use a needed, quality outcome. This process provides the structure for the level(s) of assistance to be provided, formulation of an overall project dissemination plan, and planning of particular dissemination activities.

Dissemination Prerequisites:

1. A need for an outcome must be identified by/for a target audience. Needs of target audiences are reflected in the development of dissemination plans.
2. The outcome to be disseminated must be a quality outcome.
3. Coordination, cooperation, and collaboration among persons involved in the dissemination process is required. Persons to be involved include: funding agency staff; project staff; persons/networks/agencies who facilitate access to an outcome (information networks, linker agencies); and target audience.

Dissemination Planning: Dissemination activities are planned, conducted, and followed up throughout all phases of a funded effort. Dissemination involves more than the dissemination of a primary or final outcome of a funded effort. It includes dissemination of the ideas, information, concepts, supplementary materials, etc. which contribute to the development of that primary or final outcome. Thus, dissemination planning is continuous: initiated in the proposal through the dissemination planning outline, extended throughout a funded effort as reflected in the overall project dissemination plan, and extended beyond a funded effort through post-funding dissemination.

The planning, conducting and following up of dissemination activities are individual to each funded effort. Using the Individualized Dissemination Planning Model, individual planning is reflected in the dissemination planning outline, overall project dissemination plan, and particular dissemination activities.

Program Improvement Outcomes: The term *primary or final outcomes* refers to the main outcomes of program improvement efforts. The term *supplementary outcomes* refers to those project outcomes which contribute to the development of the primary or final outcomes, e.g., field-test version of a curriculum product, public relations materials, and journal articles.

All program improvement outcomes can be classified into the categories of: general information (e.g., guidelines, public relations materials, rules and regulations); reports (e.g., bibliographies, final reports, research studies); supplementary or resource aids (e.g., handbooks, "how-to" guides);

educational products (e.g., curriculum materials, instructional guides); and intangible educational innovations (e.g., models, concepts, programs).

Individualized Dissemination Planning Model: A framework of a series of questions designed to facilitate the formulation/development of a dissemination planning outline, overall project dissemination plan, and particular dissemination activities. The model includes the interaction of the following questions.

1. What is to be disseminated?
2. Who is the target audience?
3. What is the intended extent of dissemination?
4. What is the dissemination activity(ies) to attain the intended extent?
5. What variables influence dissemination planning?
6. What is the actual extent of dissemination?

Dissemination Planning Outline: Recommended to be included in Section III—Guidelines and Specifications for Preparing Proposals of the Illinois State Board of Education, Department of Adult, Vocational and Technical Education document entitled *Request for Program Improvement Proposals in Vocational Education*, the outline provides the proposal writer with a framework to identify dissemination aims (goals) and think, plan, and budget dissemination activities. Following notice of funding, the completed outline is used as the framework with which to develop an overall project dissemination plan.

Overall Project Dissemination Plan: The formulation of how the project's primary or final outcome will be disseminated. The plan reflects the progressive dissemination process and includes the dissemination of all supplementary outcomes, as well as all activities planned, conducted, and followed up. Using the Individualized Dissemination Planning Model, the plan is individual to the final or primary outcome to be disseminated, the target audience, persons involved in planning, conducting and following up dissemination activities, and availability of temporal, financial, and human resources. It is revised as particular activities are followed up to assure quality of the primary project outcome. The overall plan is followed up to determine the extent of dissemination efforts for the project as a whole to provide information regarding post-funding dissemination efforts and commitment.

Particular Dissemination Activities: Activities which provide assistance to the target audience to become aware, understand, decide to use, and implement an outcome. Using the Individualized Dissemination Planning Model, these activities are planned, conducted, and followed up.

Persons Involved in the Dissemination Process: The dissemination role of the FUNDING AGENCY STAFF is facilitative, evaluative, and advisory in nature. Responsibilities include: (1) providing assistance to project staffs as overall project plans for dissemination of a final or primary outcome, and particular dissemination activities are formulated and followed up; (2) determining appropriateness of plans and activities, and using followup information to monitor project activities and outcomes; (3) determining dissemination commitment and funding for final or primary outcomes; and (4) facilitating the coordination and collaboration of project staffs and

appropriate information agencies/networks. Some of the benefits of taking on such responsibilities include: (1) greater visibilty and success for funded projects; (2) greater ability to monitor the quality of project activities and outcomes; (3) increased job efficiency and effectiveness; (4) national and statewide perception of providing leadership; and (5) more recognition for self and state agency.

The responibilities of the PROJECT STAFF include: (1) preparing a dissemination planning outline at the time of proposal writing; (2) preparing a dissemination plan for the project as a whole; (3) coordinating linkage with appropriate information agencies/networks; (4) following up the extent of overall project dissemination efforts; and (5) providing information and recommendations for post-funding dissemination efforts. The project staff must also anticipate questions and be able to demonstrate the usefulness of an outcome as well as how the outcome can be used. Some of the benefits of taking on such responsibilities include: (1) greater success and visibility for development activities; (2) personal satisfaction at seeing outcomes used and appreciated; and (3) recognition by colleagues and increased opportunities to attain career goals, e.g., writing commissioned articles, increasing visibility in the field, obtaining consulting jobs.

PERSONS/NETWORKS/AGENCIES WHO FACILITATE ACCESS TO AN OUTPUT can also be termed information networks. Their role is to act as a link between outcomes and potential users of those outcomes. Responsibilities include (1) collaborating with project staffs to assist with dissemination efforts which may involve planning, conducting, and following up particular dissemination activities; (2) helping local level educators indentify and clarify their needs; and (3) assisting local level educators to match appropriate program improvement outcomes with identified needs and, then assisting in providing appropriate implementation assistance. Some of the benefits which accrue to information networks/agencies for using a systematic approach to carry out the foregoing responsibilities include: (1)increased ability to do their job better; (2) greater visibility among colleagues and in the field; (3) opportunity to work with a variety of people; and (4) personal satisfaction in providing a useful service.

The TARGET AUDIENCE is typically vocational educators or, more descriptively, local level users of outcomes. With the assistance of appropriate information networks, it is their responsibility to: (1) identify and clarify program improvement needs; (2) access information regarding useability and effectiveness; and (3) articulate and communicate the type of assistance needed or wanted about outcomes. Some of the benefits of taking on such responsibilities include: (1) needs have a greater chance to be met; (2) increased ability to do their job better; and (3) opportunities to take part in decision making.

Post-Funding Dissemination: Dissemination of an outcome determined to be of at least minimal quality and to require dissemination subsequent to the initial funded effort. Possible recommendations for post-funding dissemination may include distribution through the Illinois Curriculum Publications Clearinghouse, private sector publishers, another funded project, an information network, etc.

Systematic Model of Dissemination: A description of a comprehensive, systematic approach to dissemination which comprises four integrated components each formulated on a research base. The four components include conceptual, personnel, managerial, and administrative aspects.

DISSEMINATION PROCESS GUIDELINES

There are a variety of dissemination functions, procedures, activities, and techniques. These cannot be tied up into a neat package which can be applied to each and every outcome to be disseminated (general information, product, practice, idea, and/or concept). Rather, different outputs require different dissemination plans determined by the type of output being disseminated, the persons to be affected by the dissemination activity, the persons to be involved in planning, conducting, and following up the dissemination activity, and the availability of temporal, financial, and human resources. Further, the dissemination process involves more than the dissemination of the primary or final outcome of a funded effort. It includes dissemination of the ideas, information, concepts, supplementary materials, etc. which contribute to the development of that primary or final outcome. Thus dissemination planning is continuous, initiated in the proposal, and extended throughout a funded effort and beyond.

Although dissemination is an individual planning process, three prerequisites for successful dissemination are identified:

1. A **need** for an outcome must be identified by/for a **target audience(s).**

2. The outcome to be disseminated must be a **quality outcome.**

3. **Coordination, cooperation, and collaboration** among persons involved in the dissemination process is required. Persons to be involved include: funding agency staff, project staff, persons/networks/agencies who facilitate access to an outcome and target audience.

Because dissemination is an individual planning process, a set of guidelines can be offered to facilitate this individualized planning:

1. **Classification of outcome(s):** What is to be disseminated? Is it an idea, concept, general information, curriculum product, practice, etc.?

2. **Identification of the target audience(s):** Who comprises the primary potential users of what is to be disseminated?

3. **Intended extent of dissemination:** What is the goal of the dissemination plan? What assistance to the target audience is required to attain that goal? Does the audience require assistance in becoming aware of the outcome and its contents; in understanding the outcome and how it can be used; in deciding whether or not to implement the outcome; in implementing and continuing to use the outcome?

4. **Activity(ies) to attain intended extent:** What activities can be planned and conducted to provide the assistance needed to reach the identified goal?

5. **Variables which influence dissemination planning:** What are the variables which influence the success of an activity? These variables are individual to the activity, the outcome, audience, availability of resources, etc. Particular aspects may include: advertising, incentives, use of information networks, location, packaging, working with target audience throughout development, etc.

6. **Real extent of dissemination:** To what extent were the dissemination goals attained? This includes followup of an overall project dissemination plan as well as followup of particular dissemination activities.

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Illinois State Board of Education

Department of Adult, Vocational and Technical Education
Research and Development Section

Product Abstract

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2. Date material was completed: June, 1981

3. Please check one: New material _X_ Revised material ____

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   ____ 10 Industrial Art Education
   ____ 16 Technical Education
   ____ 17 Trade and Industrial Education
   ____ 22 Cooperative Education
   ____ Career Education
   _X_ Other (Specify) General Votec

8. Education Level:

   ____ Pre-K Thru 6 ____ 7-8 ____ 9-10 ____ 11-12
   ____ Post-Secondary ____ Adult ____ Teacher (Pre-service)
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16. General Description (State the general objective and suggested method of use. Summarize the content and tell how it is organized. Continue on back of this sheet or on another sheet, if necessary.):

This report presents a systematic model of dissemination as outlined for the Illinois Department of Adult, Vocational and Technical Education, Research Coordinating Unit. The systematic model, as described, is comprised of four integrated components each formulated on a research base. Included with a description of the system as a whole and descriptions of each of the four components is a glossary of dissemination terms, dissemination process guidelines, and an individualized dissemination planning model. It is anticipated that this document will be used by Department of Adult, Vocational and Technical Education personnel and others interested in the dissemination process as the research base upon which to put into action a comprehensive, systematic approach to dissemination.

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